

Spring Plenary Session 2008
The Politics of Pedagogy: Forging Alliances for Action

Report by Helen Nickolson
April 25, 2008

I attended the following sessions:

Responding to Textbook Affordability

Keynote Presentation: "We are All One Faculty"

(BSI+SLO+SEP) *ACCJC = SIM

Area A Session

Keynote Presentation: "Forging Education Links in California"

Discipline Hearings

Minimum Qualifications, Eminence, Disciplines List

Keynote Presentation: "Unified in Common Focus: Navigating Rough Waters Together"

Voting Session for Resolutions and Representatives

Analysis:

I was somewhat disappointed in this Plenary Session. There were three keynote speakers and the only one of the three who was interesting was Scott Lay, President and CEO, Community College League of California. Although the title for this session is interesting, the workshops didn't have much connection to the theme of forging alliances.

Since the Disciplines List review has begun, I felt I should attend related sessions and I'm glad I did. I believe there are some changes that will be taking place in the formatting of the Master's and Non-Master's list and in the requirements for Non-Master's disciplines.

I believe I can give you the best flavor of this conference by referring to the resolutions. I have some of the more interesting resolutions below and they should all be on the State Academic Senate website <http://www.asccc.org/> with their outcomes next week.

SPRING 2008 PLENARY SESSION RESOLUTIONS
Some of the more interesting resolutions to me:

Passed

2.02 S08 Definition of Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Terms

Whereas, There is some confusion regarding definitions of key terms relevant to student learning outcomes and assessment; and

Whereas, There is no consensus across the state as to what defines a "program" and this directly impacts student learning outcomes and assessment practices;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges address the confusion in the field by researching and developing a glossary of common terms for student learning outcomes and assessment.

4.02 S08 Standardized Template for Advanced Placement Exam Information

Whereas, 1.2 million, or 21%, of students in the Class of 2004 took at least one Advanced Placement course (Epstein, David. *A New AP*, Inside Higher Education, May 26, 2005);

Whereas, There are 37 Advanced Placement Subject examinations, and an ever-increasing number of students with Advanced Placement scores are enrolling at California Community Colleges; and

Whereas, There is wide variation among the California Community Colleges in the dissemination of Advanced Placement course equivalency information;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, in order to facilitate the provision of Advanced Placement information to students, develop a standardized template for the dissemination of Advanced Placement equivalency information that includes a listing of all Advanced Placement examinations and any corresponding "course" and general education "area" equivalencies, including AA/AS GE, CSU GE and IGETC, for local senates to consider for adoption; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges encourage local academic senates to publish in their catalogs and schedules of classes a listing of all Advanced Placement examinations and any corresponding "course" and general education "area" equivalencies, including AA/AS GE, CSU GE and IGETC.

4.03 S08 Standardized Procedures for Determining Advanced Placement Exam Equivalencies

Whereas, 1.2 million, or 21%, of students in the Class of 2004 took at least one Advanced Placement course (Epstein, David. *A New AP*, Inside Higher Education, May 26, 2005);

Whereas, Title 5 requires that it be discipline faculty that determine Advanced Placement course equivalency, that the curriculum committee approve Advanced Placement course equivalency, and that publication of the course equivalency be included on transcripts (Title 5 § 55052);

Whereas, Many California community college faculty are unfamiliar with Advanced Placement course content and practices, and with Advanced Placement examination criteria and scoring; and

Whereas, California community colleges may have outdated or unpublished Advanced Placement course equivalency guidelines;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges develop a recommended procedure for determining Advanced Placement course equivalency; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges encourage local academic senates to develop and implement standardized procedures for determining Advanced Placement course equivalency.

4.04 S08 CCC GE Advanced Placement (AP) Equivalency

Whereas, Title 5 §55063, Minimum Requirements for the Associate Degree outlines specific general education area requirements that each college must include for the associate degree;

Whereas, The only way for a California community college student to receive associate degree General Education area credit for an AP score is if an equivalency has been locally established;

Whereas, Many students attend more than one California community college campus and AP course equivalencies may not exist or may vary greatly among the California community college campuses; and

Whereas, AP GE area course equivalencies exist system-wide for students completing IGETC or CSU GE breadth;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges develop a California community college General Education area Advanced Placement equivalency list for local consideration and potential adoption.

8.01 S08 Support for Online Counseling Services

Whereas, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is the organization whose primary function is to make recommendations with respect to academic and professional matters as defined in Title 5, Article 2 §53200;

Whereas, Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success are among the policy development and implementation matters embedded in academic and professional matters;

Whereas, Counseling faculty play an integral part in facilitating student preparation and success by providing appropriate and necessary programs and services, and one of the critical responsibilities of the counselor is to support student success in the areas of self-assessment, decision-making, and goal implementation; and

Whereas, Any California community college which has an online instructional program is mandated by the accreditation standards to provide appropriate services to students engaged in online services, including counseling and coursework;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges inform local senates of the accreditation standards that relate to student services for distance education programs in order to facilitate the development and implementation of viable online counseling programs and services designed, led, and facilitated by counseling faculty; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges provide professional development activities related to online counseling services and develop written documents describing effective practices for the provision of online student services in the California community colleges.

9.06 S08 Support for Information Competency

Whereas, In 1998 the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges adopted the position paper, *Information Competency in the California Community Colleges*, and subsequently adopted resolution 9.01 S01 recommending that information competency be a locally designed graduation requirement for degree and System Office Approved certificate programs;

Whereas, Subsequently the Department of Finance blocked implementation of the information competency graduation requirement as an “unfunded mandate,” which had a chilling effect on the implementation of local information competency graduation requirements statewide and which was opposed by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges in resolutions 5.01 F02 and 9.01 F02;

Whereas, The need for information competency, including the ability to determine information requirements for research questions, the ability to use information technology tools to locate and retrieve relevant information, the ability to understand the ethical and legal issues surrounding information and information technologies, the ability to apply the skills gained in information competency to enable lifelong learning, and the other elements of information competency, are of critical importance and provide essential skills to students entering the workforce at a time when employers demand that workers have these academic and technical abilities; and

Whereas, Many colleges may not yet have implemented an information competency graduation requirement;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges urge local senates to ensure that students demonstrate information competency; and provide advice and assistance to local senates that seek to institute new requirements in information competency; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges update the position paper *Information Competency in the California Community Colleges* to reflect the current status of information competency education statewide.

9.07 S08 Examine Title 5 “Ethnic Studies” requirement

Whereas, Title 5 §55063 (b) (3) states “Ethnic Studies will be offered in at least one of the areas required by subdivision (2)”*;

Whereas, The term “Ethnic Studies” is inconsistently used across the state to define courses and programs of study such that in some cases the offering is to promote multicultural and diversity awareness and in other cases the interpretation is to develop a high degree of expertise in specific ethnic studies subject areas;

Whereas, It is also not clear in this requirement if such studies are in fact required for all students taking general education that leads to a degree, nor is it clear just to what level or degree these studies are intended to achieve because the requirement just calls for Ethnic Studies to be offered; and

Whereas, In part due to this lack of clarity there seems to be a wide variety of ethnic study and or multicultural requirements, or lack thereof across the state, and it has been quite a long time since this requirement was first implemented such that a re-examination of the original intent and the current language to determine its effectiveness may promote changes that lead to greater and more wide-spread student understanding of ethnicity and diversity issues;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges examine sub-division §55063 (b) (3) (Title 5), along with its original intent, and the various current statewide practices for implementing the requirement to offer ethnic studies, and report back to the body its findings and recommendations.

10.01 S08 Non-Master’s Degrees in the Disciplines List

Whereas, The Disciplines List establishes the minimum qualifications for faculty and administrators in the California community colleges and consists of two lists, entitled “Disciplines Requiring the Master’s Degree” and “Disciplines in Which the Master’s Degree is Not Generally Expected or Available (commonly known as the non-Master’s list);”

Whereas, The wording in Title 5 §53410 for non-Master’s disciplines currently allows *any* bachelor’s (or associate) degree, plus the requisite years of professional experience;

Whereas, Resolution 10.02 (Fall 2004) called for the exploration of a new option in the Disciplines List to “reflect emerging disciplines requiring a bachelor’s degree in a specific major and two years of professional experience;”and

Whereas, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has held several breakouts in which attendees endorsed the proposal to modify the non-Master’s List to permit the identification of a *specific* bachelor’s (or associate) degree instead of the current regulation which allows *any* bachelor’s (or associate) degree, and to allow proposals of various combinations of education and work experience based on the expertise of the discipline faculty recommending revisions in the Disciplines List to the Academic Senate;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges propose to the Board of Governors a change in Title 5 §53410, to allow for the inclusion of specific bachelor’s and associate degrees, and to allow

proposals of various combinations of education and work experience based on the expertise of the discipline faculty recommending revisions in the Disciplines List to the Academic Senate.

13.02 S08 The Impact of Increasing Class Size on Learning and Safety in Lab Courses

Whereas, Many programs have labs that are critical to support the active learning of their students; and

Whereas, Many times these students are required to use hazardous materials and dangerous equipment that create safety issues;

Whereas, Budget and enrollment concerns may result in pressure to exceed existing course size limits;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges caution local faculty, curriculum committees and administrators that there can be a dangerous effect on student safety and learning when lab class size is increased beyond the pedagogically sound limits set by discipline faculty.

13.04 S08 Effective Practices for Online Tutoring

Whereas, Distance education has become a significant portion of California community college offerings, and parallel and equivalent services need to be offered to all students;

Whereas, Online academic tutoring services for distance education students are being implemented across the state as online programs expand; and

Whereas, Tutoring services are an effective means of supporting students, and faculty are concerned with student success and academic quality;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges research and prepare a paper that addresses effective and non-effective practices for establishing online tutoring programs.

14.02 S08 The Value of Grades

Whereas, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has developed the paper *Promoting Thoughtful Faculty Conversations about Grade Distributions* that calls on faculty and local academic senates to examine local grade distribution data and hold in-depth professional conversations about its implications for student success and public perceptions of grading;

Whereas, Public confidence in grades, their relevance, integrity and import has been challenged significantly, and the use of grades has suffered a loss of validation in the past two decades, while the U.S. Department of Education has developed official reports concluding that grading is an inadequate measure of student achievement and should be replaced by external third party testing;

Whereas, Perkins funding mechanisms for vocational education are actively promoting the replacement of traditional student assessment through a combination of grading and relevant licensure or certification testing with third party "off the shelf" testing as the "gold standard" to assess student achievement; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges create a follow-up paper to *Promoting Thoughtful Faculty Conversations about Grade Distributions* that:
analyzes the role of grades as a credible, valid and reliable measure of student achievement and success; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges share effective practices in grading, in the light of external pressures from federal and accreditation bodies; work to promote a positive public perception

regarding the integrity of grades; and oppose the replacement of traditional grades with third-party, off-the-shelf testing.

14.03 S08 Academic Integrity

Whereas, The Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges adopted the paper *Promoting and Sustaining an Institutional Climate of Academic Integrity (2006-2007)*;

Whereas, One of the paper's recommendations is "to support local faculty rights regarding Ed Code 76224(s), which provides that faculty have the final authority on grade determination, in the absence of mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency";

Whereas, The legal opinion of Ralph Black limits these rights and does not allow a faculty member to issue an "F" grade for the course for academic dishonesty, unless it is as a normal consequence of the grading system of the course; and

Whereas, The students' ability to due process is in no way removed or diminished by this resolution;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges support local faculty rights regarding Ed Code 76224 (a) which provides that faculty have the final authority on grade determination in the absence of mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency.

15.01 S08 Preparation for Community College

Whereas, The California Community College System and the Academic Senate are committed to our colleges being open access institutions;

Whereas, An unintended consequence of our colleges being fully open access institutions without academic admissions requirements is that prospective students and others may presume that there is no need for secondary students to prepare academically to attend community colleges, and as a result, students may not take advantage of the college preparation opportunities in high school;

Whereas, Up to 70-80% of entering students require basic skills instruction at community colleges, which means that they take a much longer time to complete their college goals than they would if they graduated from high school with a higher level of skills; and

Whereas, Communicating college preparation expectations to secondary students and parents is a strategy that is recommended in various research studies as a mechanism to increase student success, retention and completion in college;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges maintain its commitment to open access and simultaneously more clearly articulate and actively communicate our expected levels for entering freshmen such as was expressed in the 2000 ICAS document, *Academic Literacy: A Statement of Competencies Expected of Students Entering California's Public Colleges and Universities*; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges work with the System Office and administrative leaders to develop a clearer message and strategies to convey to secondary students, teachers and parents that optimal community college success is greatly dependent upon the skills and knowledge levels students bring with them when they enter community colleges.

16.01 S08 Inclusion of the Library in Effective Practices for Student Success

Whereas, The importance of the role of libraries and librarians in contributing to the success of students enrolled in basic skills courses was not included in either the literature review or the list of effective practices provided in the 2007 publication *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges*; and

Whereas, There is ample research that demonstrates the importance of libraries and librarians in contributing to the success of students enrolled in basic skills courses, as illustrated by the 2007 sabbatical report of City College of San Francisco Librarian Bonnie Gratch-Lindauer (see *Preparing Basic Skills Students to Succeed with Information Competency* at <http://www.topsy.org/sabbprojreplong.pdf>);

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges encourage colleges to include librarians in discussions and development of Basic Skills Initiative plans;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges disseminate to California Community Colleges information on ways to incorporate appropriate library activities into Basic Skills Initiative plans; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges request that the Basic Skills Initiative Steering Committee incorporate appropriate library activities into the assessment tool and effective practices portion of any future editions of *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges*.

19.02 S08 Support for Library and Counseling Faculty Participation in Participatory Governance and Professional Development

Whereas, Faculty participation in participatory governance processes defined by Assembly Bill 1725 (1988) and Title 5 is an integral part of the California Community College System;

Whereas, Title 5 does not distinguish between library, counseling or other faculty with regard to shared governance obligations;

Whereas, Participation by all faculty in professional development activities is essential to maintenance of currency and relevancy in all aspects of the duties of faculty; and

Whereas, Participation by library and counseling faculty is essential to engage the unique viewpoints provided by faculty with these preparations and campus experiences;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges support the value and inclusion of counseling and library faculty in participatory governance processes; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges oppose the efforts of some districts to disenfranchise library and counseling faculty by local contract negotiations or in any other way that is incongruent with faculty participatory governance obligations and professional development opportunities.

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20.01 S08 Reducing Textbook Costs

Whereas, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is on record as encouraging faculty to consider the cost of books;

Whereas, Textbook prices have increased beyond the resources of many students; and

Whereas, The Fall 2005 paper *Textbook Issues: Economic Pressures and Academic Values* provided recommendations to local academic senates about how to reduce textbook costs for our students;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges encourage local academic senates to re-introduce this paper to their local senates for continued dialogue about how to reduce textbook costs;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges conduct a survey of local senates to ascertain the progress made on the recommendations listed above regarding textbooks; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges share the results of the survey along with effective practices for improving textbook purchasing, loans, online resources, and related issues at the Spring 2009 Plenary Session.

21.01 S08 The Effect of Expanding Nursing Programs

Whereas, As the foremost sources of training for nurses in California, the California community colleges responded to the severe nursing shortage by increasing the number of students accepted into nursing programs statewide;

Whereas, The System Office and the Governor have funded this effort recently with specialized grants that allow for a specific increase in nursing student admissions; and

Whereas, New grant requirements mandate additional expansion of student admissions without adequate consideration of the impact upon course delivery, the subsequent choices to select the most effective instructional methodologies, and the availability of quality clinical experiences needed to achieve a quality outcome and student success - all of which are under the purview of Title 5 §53200 (10+1);

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges work with the System Office to evaluate data from the California community college nursing programs on the impact on program and curricular quality as a result of this rapid expansion and on the outcomes and issues relevant to quality program expansion; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges work with the System Office and the Governor's Office to discuss options for expanding nursing programs only after a careful exploration of the impact on course delivery, instruction, clinical experiences, and existing local nursing program placements.

21.02 S08 Setting Accountability Targets for Perkins IV

Whereas, Perkins IV has new requirements that are to be implemented in 2008, and these new requirements change how programs will qualify for funding;

Whereas, Program review and development, curriculum and student success are under local academic senate purview, and the Perkins IV accountability measures on student success impact these; and

Whereas, At some colleges the administrators are setting the accountability targets to qualify for Perkins funding without conversations with their occupational faculty;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges remind local academic senates that faculty should be setting the student success accountability targets for their occupational programs; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges work with the System Office to ensure that when System Office staff communicate with occupational deans, they remind them that faculty should be setting the student success accountability targets for their occupational programs.

Failed

21.03 S08 Alternative Minimum Qualifications

Whereas, Title 5 requires that faculty, in those disciplines which do not require the master's degree, have at least an associate's degree;

Whereas, It is desirable for faculty members teaching these disciplines to have at least this minimum level of education;

Whereas, It has proven difficult to find instructors with the desired level of experience and education; and

Whereas, Colleges have, out of necessity, hired instructors who have had less than the desired level of experience because these candidates possess the minimum level of education;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges request the Board of Governors make the following addition to the Title 5 minimum qualifications:

For disciplines where the master's degree is not customarily required:

A candidate, who has at least six years journey level experience and who has earned at least 12 semester units at an accredited college or university may be provisionally hired under the following conditions:

- a) completes an associate degree at an accredited college or university within three years of being hired, and
- b) makes satisfactory progress toward an associate degree at an accredited college or university during each of the three years after being hired, and
- c) completes at least six units of instruction in the field of curriculum and instructional methods at an accredited college or university within the three year period after being hired, and
- d) that it is expressly understood that if progress is not being made toward the associate degree, or if the degree is not completed within three years after hiring, the instructor will be discharged; and

Resolved, That nothing in these new requirements is intended to represent a claim of equivalence or eminence.

Unsure on Status

4.01 S08 Concurrent Enrollment

Whereas, The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges passed two resolutions in the Fall 2007 about Concurrent Enrollment (4.01 and 4.02) calling for local and statewide discussions about expanding the opportunities for secondary students to be concurrently enrolled in college courses;

Whereas, There are legislative policy discussions underway to permit more opportunities for concurrent enrollment; and

Whereas, Faculty have raised various concerns such as the need to maintain a college climate in each classroom, to ensure that academic freedom is not compromised with the enrollment of more secondary students, and to ensure colleges have policies in place about minors on campus;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges work with the Chancellor's Office and Legislators to ensure that any legislation regarding concurrent enrollment is consistent with the recommendations in the Academic Senate's Fall 2006 paper, *Minors on Campus*, specifically recognizing the recommendations that 1) minor students are entering an adult environment; 2) curriculum and college processes will not be changed to accommodate minor students, for example in areas of course content and academic freedom; 3) local board policies agreed to through collegial consultation with the academic senate may limit the number of secondary students college-wide and in an individual class; and 4) faculty should be informed prior to enrollment of minors in their classes and retain the right to deny enrollment on educational grounds.

Referred to Executive Committee to be Brought Back Next Fall

9.08 S08 Defining the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees

Whereas, The Academic Senate paper *What is the Meaning of a California Community College Degree* highlighted the fact that the inconsistent application of AA and AS to our associate degrees across colleges fails to convey a clear idea to students and to the public about the value of an associate degree;

Whereas, A survey by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Associate Degree Task Force, in response to this paper, found strong support for the standardization of these terms;

Whereas, Resolution 9.01 S07 called on the Academic Senate to support and establish statewide definitions for the types of associate degrees offered by California community colleges; and

Whereas, The Associate Degree Task Force was asked to develop a proposal for a possible Title 5 change to bring back to the body for discussion and consideration;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges support defining the Associate of Science degree in Title 5 regulation as an associate degree in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) or in the area of career technical education (CTE), with all other associate degrees given the title of Associate of Arts.

13.05 S08 Online Course Survey

Whereas, The number of online classes that community colleges offer has increased;

Whereas, Questions have been raised by various faculty regarding working conditions and full participation in academic and professional matters by faculty who teach online; and

Whereas, Some of the pertinent issues are: accessibility due to the digital divide, percentage of faculty workload on campus and online, shared governance responsibilities, student options between online or on-campus course offerings, use of pedagogy as compared to on-campus pedagogy, and online student satisfaction;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, working with faculty unions, develop a survey about such issues, and using the information derived from the survey, present a breakout at Spring 2009 plenary session.